



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

session of Mr. George T. Porter, of Indianapolis. In the *Indianapolis Press*, December 19, 1899, is an interesting account of this pioneer sheet, with matter quoted from its columns.

The *Indianapolis Gazette* from 1824 to its period of ceasing, and also the *Western Censor and Emigrant's Guide* (complete), the forerunner of the *Indiana Journal*, are in the City Library of Indianapolis. This library has by far the fullest collection in existence of Indianapolis newspapers. Locked in these files is matter of inestimable value in its relation to the development of the city. Unfortunately, the incomplete and wholly inadequate catalogue furnished by the library is practically no guide to the collection, and does not even indicate the presence in it of some of its rarest possessions; hence the usefulness of the collection is by no means what it might be.

GEORGE S. COTTMAN.

THE FIRST PRINTERS IN INDIANAPOLIS.

GEORGE SMITH AND NATHANIEL BOLTON.

From The Indianapolis Sentinel, August 27, 1899.

GEORGE SMITH was born in Lancaster, Pa., and while quite young learned the printing trade with one of the Bradfords, the colonial printers in Pennsylvania. In the earlier part of this century he removed from Philadelphia to Chillicothe, O., and while living there married Mrs. Nancy Bolton, a widow, whose maiden name was Cox. She was a sister of Nathaniel Cox, one of the early pioneers and hunters of Indianapolis. "Uncle Nat Cox," as he was familiarly called, was a carpenter by trade, but was excessively fond of hunting, and in his day had no equal in central Indiana as a first-class "shot" with the rifle, the only species of firearms then in use in the West.

Mrs. Bolton's only child by her first husband was Nathaniel Bolton, who was born in Chillicothe, O., July 25, 1803. Elizabeth Smith, his half-sister, was born in the same town February 17, 1809. Her father had become the owner of a printing office, which was, almost always, in the same house in which they lived. Mr. Smith was a man of fair education, very industrious,

a master of the art of printing, a good writer, of untiring energy, and was well liked by all of his acquaintance. Like all printers of that period and some of later years, he was by force of circumstances and disposition unsettled as to location, often going from one town to another, not only as a mere journeyman printer, but as the owner and publisher of his own newspaper.

The daughter Elizabeth grew up to be a remarkably intelligent and observing woman, of clear memory, full of wit and humor, whose conversations relating to the early settlement of Indianapolis were always interesting to listeners. A short time before her death she noted down in a book many interesting particulars of her earlier life, and it is from this book, now in possession of her daughter, Mrs. Maria Goldsberry Tanner, of this city, widow of the late Major Gordon Tanner, and mother of George G. Tanner, of the firm of Tanner & Sullivan and late surveyor of customs at Indianapolis, that many of the incidents herein related have been obtained by the kind permission of Mrs. Tanner. Elizabeth's earliest recollections were of the printing office, wherein most of her childhood was spent. She was probably the first female typesetter in all the western country. When she was about three or four years old her father moved to Worthington, a small place near Columbus, O., and then back again to Chillicothe. At this place the family lived quite a while, Nathaniel going to school to a Presbyterian minister, receiving some instruction. His practical education, however, was in the printing office. The little girl took great delight in helping her father and brother in the printing office as much as her age would permit.

In 1820 Mr. Smith caught the emigration fever. The "new purchase" of land from the Indians in the neighboring State of Indiana was then attracting much attention, and Mr. Smith determined to leave Ohio and try his fortune in the Hoosier State. At Cincinnati he arranged for passage down the Ohio river on the steam packet General Pike, but was compelled to cancel the contract and change his plans of travel by reason of the timidity of Mrs. Smith, who, on first seeing a steamboat, declared she would not go aboard of what seemed to her a dangerous craft. While there they all visited Wells's type foundry, which was a novelty and a great object of interest to Nathaniel and Elizabeth,

they witnessing for the first time the process of making moveable types.

Other means of transportation than that of steamboat was obtained, Mr. Smith arranging for the accommodation of his own and another family on an Allegheny river timber boat from Olean, N. Y., and on this they floated down the river quite comfortably. The rude craft had fireplaces at each end large enough to do their cooking. Uncle Nat Cox steered the vessel. On reaching Ghent, Ky., the rough weather compelled a "tie up," and the occupants went ashore, where they were entertained a few days by a family of former acquaintance in Chillicothe. The storm abating, they returned to the boat and floated down to Jeffersonville without further delay or trouble.

At Jeffersonville a wagon was hired in which they proceeded to Corydon, the then seat of government of the new State. Not liking the place, Mr. Smith arranged for a partnership with a Mr. Brandon, and, returning to Jeffersonville, they opened a book and job printing office, in which Mr. Smith made more than expenses. His objective point on first coming to Indiana was the capital of the State, the location of which had in 1820 been settled by the commissioners fixing it at the junction of Fall creek and White river, and naming the town Indianapolis. The family remained in Jeffersonville during the summer of 1821, awaiting the announcement of the first sale of lots at the capital. The lots having been surveyed and laid out, the first sale was held in October, 1821. Mr. Smith attended this sale, walking all the way there and back. He purchased two lots, on one of which stood a buckeye cabin built by a squatter, who, getting homesick, deserted it and returned to his home in Kentucky.

Some weeks after Mr. Smith's return he removed the family and his little printing office and some "plunder" to Indianapolis, the journey being a remarkable one. Inside of a large four-horse wagon was stored the type, cases, stands, press and other materials of a primitive printing office, a meager lot of household effects and wearing apparel, and the family, or rather such of them as rode, the male members walking most of the way. The route was over a "blazed trail." The only towns they passed through were Paoli, Bedford and Brownstown. The remaining portion of the journey was made through an unbroken

wilderness of dense growth, wholly unsettled. They camped out two nights during a heavy snowstorm and suffered other privations.

Late one cold, stormy night, about two weeks before Christmas, they drew up in front of their cabin and took possession. With plenty of wood, they soon had a good fire and their first supper in Indianapolis. This was served on a store goods box for a table, with smaller boxes for seats, there being but one chair in the house. The little cabin had but one room, which served for the printing office, bed-room, dining-room and kitchen. Elizabeth describes her bedstead as having been made of two old sugar troughs with rails and short boards laid crossways, on which was placed a good feather bed "made up nice." The father and mother's bed was composed of two buckeye logs and rails, overlaid with brush. With the printing press and stands for two sets of type cases but little room was left for lodging, cooking and eating; but they managed to make themselves comfortable, though compactly housed. A Dr. Scudder, who had his office in a near-by cabin, kindly let them fix up a bed there for Uncle Nat Cox and a journeyman printer who had been hired for a while.

Thus was inaugurated the first printing office from which was issued the *Indianapolis Gazette*, the first newspaper ever published in the new town of Indianapolis, the proprietor of which was the editor, publisher and printer all combined in himself. Writing his own editorials, he would then set them up in type, make up the forms and work off the paper on a two-pull Ramage hand press. The forms were inked by hand with buckskin balls stuffed with wool and greased with coon oil to soften them when not in use. The composition rollers were then unknown. The first or outside forms of two pages were printed the first part of the week and the corresponding inside forms were struck off usually on Friday and the paper circulated Saturday morning.

Nathaniel Bolton had remained in New Albany to finish some work on printing the laws of the State. After completing this job, he found a man going to Indianapolis with a lot of horses, who allowed him to ride one, and on reaching there he joined Mr. Smith in the work of the publication of the *Gazette*, and afterward became first a partner and then sole proprietor.

The first residence and printing office herein described was on Maryland street, just below the crossing of Missouri street, and between that place and the old cemetery Mr. Smith opened up a fine sugar camp.

During the winter of 1821-'22 Elizabeth Smith, then about thirteen years old, learned to set type, and did considerable work in assisting her father and brother in getting out the paper. In 1824 her father bought a lot cornering on Georgia and Tennessee streets, on which now stands St. John's Cathedral and other buildings connected with that parish. On this lot he built a house into which he moved the printing office and residence. After this removal Elizabeth quit typesetting.

This same year Washington and Meridian streets were opened and the trees, stumps and undergrowth removed. The first courthouse was built about the same time, and in it was held the first legislative session at the new capital.

Mr. Smith soon after became a judge of the Marion circuit court, retiring from the printing business and surrendering the proprietorship of the *Gazette* to his step-son, Nathaniel Bolton. As a judicial officer he served with great ability and fairness. Mr. Smith died April 10, 1836, after a lingering illness, aged fifty-two. According to his last request he was buried at Mt. Jackson, the name given to the farm on which he last resided. The remains were afterward removed to Greenlawn cemetery.

Mr. Bolton succeeded to the ownership of this farm, and here he and his wife, Mrs. Sarah T. Bolton, kept a tavern for nine years. At the same time Mr. Bolton kept up his journalistic work, while Mrs. Bolton wrote many of her earliest poems during the leisure hours from the labors incident to the farm and tavern. In the fall of 1845 Mr. Bolton sold to the State the farm as a site for the Indiana Hospital for the Insane, the selling price being \$5,300.

The difficulties of obtaining news at the commencement of Mr. Smith's newspaper enterprise were great. The nearest post-office was Connersville, sixty miles away. The enterprising publisher however, established a private mail, employing a man to go there every four weeks to bring the letters and newspapers.

In December, 1822, President James Monroe sent to Congress one of his short messages, a copy of which reached Indianapolis

in February, 1823, and was published in instalments in two or three succeeding numbers of the *Gazette*.

Soon after a regular United States mail route was established, and then mails reached Indianapolis from the East every two weeks, unless detained by high waters.

Mr. Smith's father brought in a wagon from Springfield, O., driven by himself, the white paper on which the first issues of the *Gazette* were printed. After Mr. Bolton became sole proprietor in 1824 the *Gazette* office was removed, first to a house on the corner of Washington and Tennessee streets on the State House square, and then to the south side of Washington street a few doors west of the court-house.

When I came to Indianapolis in 1837, a boy of nine years of age, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Bolton and his partner, John Livingston, the proprietors of the *Democrat*, and for a few years worked in their printing office as a roller boy, printer's devil and carrier of the paper. At that time the old double-pull Ramage press was still in the office, and many a time have I inked the forms thereon, as a roller boy. This work was then done with rollers made of glue and molasses, in the molding of which I always had a hand. During my employment I made several trips to the Mt. Jackson farm, on foot, for "copy" and "corrected proofs."

The *Indiana Democrat* was continued by that name until 1841, when George A. Chapman, publisher of a paper at Terre Haute, and Jacob Page Chapman, his brother, publisher of a paper at Evansville, purchased the *Democrat*, adding to its material all of their types and presses, and changing the name of the paper to *The Indiana State Sentinel*. They continued to own and publish the paper until 1850, when I became the purchaser of the name and good will of the paper, for which I purchased an entirely new plant of presses, types and printing materials.

AUSTIN H. BROWN.